

THE Spiritual Magazine.

FEBRUARY, 1873.

THE *TIMES* ON SPIRITUALISM AND SCIENCE.

[The *Times* of December 26th has an article on "Spiritualism and Science," occupying three columns and a half of leading type, and which we present, omitting only a defective and sarcastic account (made to appear more so by some curious misprints) of the evidence taken by the Committee of the Dialectical Society; and which it is the less necessary to reproduce as a fair abstract of this important report and accompanying evidence was given in this Magazine, Nos. 11 and 12, Vol. VI., and No. 1, Vol. VII., New Series. Notwithstanding the sneer of the *Times* at the unsatisfactory conclusion of the Dialectical Society's Committee, it will be seen that its own conclusion as to the necessity of a "timely enquiry" by scientific men, who hitherto "in this matter have signally failed to do their duty by the public which looks to them for its facts; and that now "It is high time competent hands undertook the unravelling of this Gordian knot," which "must be fairly and patiently unravelled and not cut through," is in substance identical with it and it is the only practical suggestion the *Times* has to offer, and this perhaps is as much as can reasonably be expected from either a leading journal, like the *Times*, or a body constituted like the Committee named. Both alike concede the reality of the phenomena known as spiritual manifestations, and the absence of any evidence to prove them the work of imposture. Thus much conceded, we know what the inevitable conclusion in the end must be. The more "thorough and practical" and "impartial" the investigation the better.

The *Spiritualist* of January 15th prints a full report of the chief *séance* at which the *Times* Commissioner was present. Our contemporary says, "It will show how very carefully the narrative was pruned down before publication, and that startling as were the facts given to the public, several of a very remarkable character were omitted. The *Times* article, as originally given in by the author, was nearly twice its present length. The *séance* took place a year ago, namely on the 24th November, 1871. Notes of all the occurrences were made in writing directly they were witnessed. The full narrative was written out from the notes immediately after the *séance*, and a copy sent to Mr. N. B., the *Times* Commissioner. He returned it with pencil memoranda." These memoranda are appended as foot notes by our contemporary, but they are unimportant.]

"It is now nearly 20 years since the late Professor Faraday made public the result of his investigations into the then fashionable mania of table-turning. With apparent conclusiveness, he proved that the mysterious movements which were at that time the new nine-days' wonder of the world, arose from unconscious muscular action; but, such is the tenacity of a belief

once received into the mind, this solution of the *pseudo*-marvel seems to have satisfied few but those who were prepared to accept it by previous disbelief. Spiritualism and its adherents never heeded it; they went on their way rejoicing, and rose day by day on stepping-stones of their former selves to mysteries wonderful and still more wonderful. Our Australian correspondence of this morning shows that the Spiritualistic epidemic has reached the Antipodes, and that it has already attained the dignity there of having its own Press, and, still more, its own schismatics and sectarians. That in a generation which boasts itself to be one of exact science and plain matter of fact, a belief should have been so long lived, and should have grown even to such proportions that Mr. William Howitt, one of its chief fanatics, can number its adherents at 'twenty millions,' and that it should have attained to such an age and vitality without its falsity having been demonstrated to the satisfaction of all but the very ignorant, is strange indeed. It is evident either that the subject is surrounded by unusual difficulties or that in this matter our scientific men have signally failed to do their duty by the public, which looks to them for its facts. We believe the latter to be the case. It may be said, and is said by some, that Spiritualism was long ago investigated and proved to be a mass of imposture and delusion; but, as a matter of fact, this is not so, for there has never been undertaken an inquiry of that impartial, authoritative, and thorough nature which alone can decide a prejudiced controversy. Our *savans*, too much preferring to give themselves up to such matters as the descent of men from monkeys, or the fertilization of the world by means of mossy stones falling through space, have forgotten that, however absurd the phenomena and paraphernalia of Spiritualism may be, the sifting and settling of the whole matter, once and for all, would be a practical benefit, for which the age would thank them at least as much as it thanks them for recondite theories and abstract speculations, half of which are only laid up in print for the next generation to ridicule.

"Some time ago there was a transient promise of better things. A society calling itself by the high-sounding name of the 'London Dialectical Society' had resolved to make a thorough investigation of the 'phenomena alleged to be spiritual manifestations, and to report thereon.' A committee had been nominated, scientific men and all who were interested in the subject had been invited to co-operate, and many people were simple enough to hope that the nonsense and the jargon which had for the last twenty years been going about the world under the name of Spiritualism would now be stripped from whatever facts might underlie them. This hope was reasonable enough,

but was utterly crushed when in due process of time, the 'Report on Spiritualism by a Committee of the Dialectical Society' made its appearance with Messrs. Longmans' name on the title-page. . . . The Report filled altogether some 400 pages, and the sum total of 18 months' investigation amounted to just this, that—

" 'Your Committee, taking into consideration the high character and great intelligence of many of the witnesses to the more extraordinary facts, the extent to which their testimony is supported by the reports of the sub-committees and the absence of any proof of imposture or delusion as regards a large portion of the phenomena; and, further, having regard to the exceptional character of the phenomena, the large number of persons in every grade of society and over the whole civilized world who are more or less influenced by a belief in their supernatural origin, and to the fact that no philosophical explanation of them has yet been arrived at, deem it incumbent upon them to state their conviction that the subject is worthy of more serious attention and careful investigation than it has hitherto received.'

" Despite its portentous preamble, this judgment left the matter exactly where it was before, and surely it did not need 18 months of consideration to convince us that Spiritualism, or any other disputed matter, was worthy of 'serious attention' and 'careful investigation.'

" Such was the *Report on Spiritualism*, and our readers will probably agree that if it proves nothing else it proves that it's high time competent hands undertook the unravelling of this Gordian knot. It must be fairly and patiently unravelled, and not cut through. The slash of an Alexandrian blade has been tried often enough, and has never sufficed. Scientific men forget that in the matter of Spiritualism they must make themselves fools that they may become wise. They must conform to the conditions imposed; even in conjuring one has to do as much as this. They must meet the 'mediums' on their own ground, and if possible, cut that ground from under their feet. To take an extreme case, Spiritualists assert that certain phenomena are only manifested in a half light, or in the dark; scientific men refuse to meet them under these conditions, and what is the result? Causes are not ascertained, delusions are not exposed, impositions are not detected, and the company of fools are confirmed in their belief. Surely a scientific man is a match for a medium, even in the dark, and surely the one can bring his science to bear wherever the other can bring his 'mediumship,' whatever that may be! We will suppose that the man of science consents to sit at a dark *séance*, and that something happens which he cannot explain. What then? He is not compromised or converted, and, without being in the least so, may go again and again, and it will be strange if by dint of precautions and expedients he cannot sift the whole matter in a very few sittings. It is owing to the stiffness of scientific men,

and their refusal to meet the Spiritualists on their own ground; that this matter has not been settled long ago.

"If anything more were needed to show the necessity for timely inquiry into this apparently ridiculous but really very serious subject, it is the accounts given by such men as Lord Lytton and Dr. Edmunds of the lamentable consequences of following after Spiritualism. Lord Lytton tells us, and we can readily believe him, of devotees to Spiritualism duped into disgrace and ruin through acting upon a belief that they are hearing predictions and receiving counsels from beings wiser than themselves, and Dr. Edmunds quotes several cases of lunacy and paralysis occurring in his experience within a few months in persons in the habit of attending dark *séances*.

"A volume now lying before us may serve to show how this folly has spread throughout society. It was lent to us by a distinguished Spiritualist, under the solemn promise that we should not divulge a single name of those concerned. It consists of about 150 pages of reports of *séances*, and was privately printed by a noble Earl, who has lately passed beyond the House of Lords, beyond also, we trust, the spirit-peopled chairs and tables which in his life-time he loved, not wisely, but too well. In this book things more marvellous than any we have set down are circumstantially related, in a natural way, just as though they were ordinary, everyday matters of fact. We shall not fatigue the reader by quoting any of the accounts given, and no doubt, he will take our word when we say that they range through every species of 'manifestation,' from prophesyings downwards. What we more particularly wish to observe is, that the attestation of 50 respectable witnesses is placed before the title-page. Among them are, a Dowager Duchess and other ladies of rank, a Captain in the Guards, a nobleman, a Baronet, a Member of Parliament, several officers of our scientific and other corps, a barrister, a merchant, and a doctor. Upper and upper middle-class society is represented in all its grades, and by persons who, to judge by the position they hold and the callings they follow, ought to be possessed of intelligence and ability. Certainly, it is time that a thorough and practical investigation cleared this cloud out of the intellectual sky, and the task need not be scouted by professors or other learned men, by Royal or other learned Societies.

"Before writing upon this subject we thought it our duty to see with our own eyes the actual development which Spiritualism has attained here in London. We accordingly attended four *séances*, each different and each remarkable in its way. The first was at a private house, where machinery in the furniture or any similar deception was out of the question. The party was

of eight persons, we think, but it does not matter, and Mr. Home was the medium. We sat round a table for about two hours, but nothing whatever occurred, except that a gentleman, who probably was susceptible to draughts, declared that he felt a 'cold air' on his hands. The next day, at twelve o'clock, we visited, in company of a friend, the rooms of two mediums of considerable reputation. We were shown into a small and rather shabby drawing-room, divided in the usual way by folding doors. The curtains and blinds of the front windows, which looked on to the street were half drawn, and the window in the back room was entirely darkened, the shutter being closed over the blind, and every ray of light jealously excluded by thick felt nailed across. Nevertheless as it was the middle of the day, and the two rooms together were but small, the back room, so long as the folding doors remained open was sufficiently lighted from the front windows. We inquired of the mediums if they could show us anything in daylight, and were told that at first such a sitting would probably be unsuccessful, but that after a few attendances the phenomena would doubtless manifest themselves to us in a full light. For the present, therefore, we had no choice but to sit in the back room in the pitch dark, with the folding doors closed. The room we should think, measured not more than ten feet square, and was in every respect an ordinary shabby little apartment. We searched it as thoroughly as we could but found nothing. We sounded and scrutinized the floor and walls, turned up the felt stretched over the shuttered window, suspiciously inspected the six or seven common cane-bottom chairs and the small round table which were the furniture, but all in vain, we had only our trouble for our pains. We sat down at the small round table in the back room, our friend opposite to us, and one of the mediums on our left. The other medium held open the folding door till we had arranged our seats, standing at the inside with the handle in his hand; when we were ready he closed the door and took his place. We were now in total darkness, with the exception of the least chink of light which found its way under the folding door. We took hold of one hand of each medium, and at the same time pressed a foot and knee firmly against the foot and knee on each side of us. Our friend sat in precisely the same manner, and thus the mediums were kept in complete custody. A box of matches was on the table. We sat as still as a mouse, listening for the least sound. Presently we felt something hard pressing gently against the back of our head. Saying nothing, we leaned our head backwards, when the substance seemed to yield and slid softly over our hair. We made a sudden grasp at it with our left hand, still holding fast the right hand of the medium when there was a sound of

something falling heavily on the table. Our friend instantly struck a match, and lo ! one of the cane-bottomed chairs, which when we sat down were arranged round the room, was lying on the table. Throwing the match into the fireplace we sat some time longer—but nothing of consequence happened. Once, despite the warning of the mediums, that whatever was in the air would instantly fall, perhaps on our head, we struck a match suddenly, but discovered nothing. We placed the chair down again by the wall and sat on, but nothing happened, and presently getting tired of sitting in the dark, clasping clammy hands, we opened the folding doors and ended the *séance*. We searched and re-searched the room, but found nothing abnormal. The furniture now became quite lively—and this in broad daylight. A chair jumped three or four yards across the carpet, our hat fell at our feet, and numerous other phenomena occurred, but nothing so satisfactory as the chair in the dark, for then we had fast hold of the mediums, whereas now they were moving about the room, and, somehow or other, everything seemed to occur just when we were not looking, and one of them was somewhere behind us. But we must confess the chair in the dark fairly puzzled us, and we came away, very far indeed from being Spiritualists, but wishing we could spare time and trouble to come again and again till we had sifted the whole matter to the bottom.

“ Our third *séance* was held in the evening at the house of a famous professional medium. We and our friend were admitted by special favour, for the lady in question has been left money, has retired from public practice, and lives in a handsome way somewhere towards Hampstead. We sat in the drawing-room, in a good light of gas, and scarcely had the medium touched the small round table than John King, her well-known familiar, took possession of it and caused it to play all manner of antics. It jumped into our lap and into the air, and conducted itself in the wildest way. But the lady's fingers, and they were strong, were upon it all the time, and there was also a difficulty and a delicacy in clearing her dress quite away from the claws of the pedestal. We do not for a moment accuse the medium of cheating, but these are facts. What we wanted were decided raps and motion absolutely without contact, and this we were unable to obtain, though we made several attempts. An alphabet of printed letters was now laid on the table, and we were desired to think of a name and pass a pencil along the lines of letters. We thought of one, and moved the pencil over the paper. Knowing the eye of the medium was upon us, we tried our best to move it with the regularity of machinery, but John King was too clever to be eluded ; he rapped at the right letters, and spelt out the name. In this way we obtained several remarkable answers,

but in each case the answer was known to ourself and fixed in our minds, and until some other solution is demonstrated, we must think that the sagacity of the lady had more to do with it than John King. One crucial test was proposed by the medium herself. We were asked to think of a name, to fix it firmly in our minds, place a pencil and paper under the table, and to see whether John King would write it for us. We thought of a name the medium could not possibly know, and waited in all anxiety, for this was a test indeed—a test that, had it been successfully withstood, would have proved conclusively the existence of something in Spiritualism beyond the legerdemain of the medium. We heard the pencil scratching, we cast what downward eye we could towards the lady's feet, they seemed perfectly still. The scratching ceased, and we picked up the paper. There was some writing on it, of about the length of the name we had thought of, and the first and last letters were correct. But the rest of the word was utterly illegible, and two letters were not enough to get the idea of chance out of our mind. We now adjourned to the dining-room, to see what John King could do in the dark. A paper tube was laid on the table, which we were assured, it was his common habit to speak through. We asked the medium if she would consent to lay her hands on the table and allow us to place ours upon them. She readily consented. In a few moments there came five or six raps, the spiritual signal for the alphabet. The letters were quickly run over, and it was soon spelt out that we were taking all the magnetism, and that John King could do no more that evening. He said good night to us in a succession of raps, beginning loudly and gradually dying away into an apparent distance. We also then said good night to the medium, and came away, having detected no imposture, having seen and heard much that was curious, but certainly having neither seen nor heard anything to convince us even of the existence of a new force, much less of the supernature of John King.

“Our fourth and last *séance* occurred at a private house. There were nine persons present, including Mr. D. Home and Miss Fox, the well-known American medium. We formally searched the room and examined the furniture before we sat down at the table, which measured four feet five inches by six feet four inches. The room was at first well-lighted by a gas burner over head. On the table was an accordion which we took to pieces and tried, and found to be in every respect an ordinary instrument; a light lath about two feet long, a small brass hand bell, matches (paper (which we marked), pencils, and two spirit lamps. We sat down, and almost immediately loud raps appeared to come from the table and floor. Miss Fox then got up and went to the door of the room inviting us to stand by her and

to hold her hands, which we did, when loud thumps seemed to come from the panels as if done with the fist. These were repeated at our request any desired number of times. To give a detailed account of everything which occurred would need more space than we can now spare. Suffice it to say, that the table was made light and heavy at our wish, that it moved in every direction, that there were vibrations of the floor and of our chairs, that on Mr. Home holding the accordion under the table in his right hand and by the end furthest from the keys, it played a distinct tune, Mr. Home's left hand being on the table and his feet so raised as to be visible. All other hands were on the table. At the same time, and under the same conditions, a small hand bell was rung in different parts of the space beneath the table. The gas was now turned out and the two spirit lamps lit; these gave a fair light. The raps became louder, and, in the usual method, directed us to take a leaf out of the table. This was done, when the table appeared to float up about eight inches off the floor, settling down again in a gentle swaying manner. The thin wooden lath lying on the cloth was seen by the whole party to be in motion. It tilted up sideways and endways, and then seemed to float backwards and forwards. Holding our hand three inches, as near as we could guess, above the cloth, the lath rose three times; the last time it touched our hand, and directly afterwards the table jumped and shook violently, and loud raps seemed to come from all parts of it and of the floor. The spirit lamps were now put out, and what light there was from a low fire only just enabled us to see white paper on the table and each other's positions. Presently, Mr. Home's and Miss Fox's hands and feet being in strict custody, we felt the accordion pressing against our knees. We put our hand under the table, when the instrument appeared to be moving round, till its wooden base was placed between our fingers. In that position we held it with its keys downwards; it seemed to be pushed up towards our hand and played a few bars. It then stopped, and presently we felt the bell thrust between the fingers of the same hand. Almost immediately a flower or sprig was put into our fingers, but as we were already holding in one hand the accordion and the bell, the sprig was dropped. It was picked up and again put into our fingers, and as we received it we felt distinctly the touch of a large thumb and finger. We did not let it drop this time, and there was immediately a succession of raps of a loud and jubilant nature. They seemed to come from the table in our immediate vicinity. A match was now struck, and we drew our tired hand from under the table, displaying the accordion, the bell, and the sprig. This was the end of the *séance*, for the spirit would do no more. In the account of it we have omitted several experiments

about which we cannot speak decidedly. We tried every test we could think of. A subdued light, darkened as the evening went on, was one of the conditions we were obliged to comply with, and while the accordion was in our hand we were desired to sit passive, though as we stated the hands and feet of the mediums were in strict custody. Mr. Home seemed to wish to conceal nothing, and gave us every opportunity, consistent with the above conditions, for satisfying our scepticism. Yet we need hardly say that we were unable to satisfy it. By his request we got under the table with a lamp a great many times, insisted always on seeing his hands and feet, or on having them as well as those of Miss Fox held firmly. As to the hand with which Mr. Home held the accordion under the table, all we know is that on one of our sub-mahogany expeditions with the spirit lamp, we saw that hand quite still, and saw the accordion moving up and down and playing music. We heard the key notes, but the position of the instrument prevented our seeing the keys moving, if they did move. There was nothing during the whole evening except the phenomena themselves to suggest imposture. We tried our best to detect it, but could find no traces of it. We searched Mr. Home, and could find nothing whatever upon him but his clothes.

"Yet, even with all this, we are not a Spiritualist, and do not even believe in a psychic force. We remember and lay to heart Mr. G. H. Lewes's admirable maxim, 'Distinguish between facts and inferences from facts.' We are certain that the table rose from the ground, that our hands received a sprig under the table from what felt like another hand, but how these things happened we do not know. The nature of the phenomena, and of human nature, are such as to force us to suspect imposture and legerdemain, until we can satisfy ourselves of the true causes, whatever these may be."

SCIENCE TO THE RESCUE.

MR. HENRY DIRCKS, F.C.S.

IN response to the old call, now raised by the *Times*, "Science to the Rescue," Mr. Henry Dircks, F.C.S., inventor of the Ghost Illusion at the Polytechnic, spurred into the lists in hot haste. In a letter which appeared in the *Times* the following morning, he begins by stating that he has been for upwards of 40 years a worker in science, and especially electricity, and he evidently considers this a sufficient qualification (as he neither exhibits

nor pretends to any other) for offering a few passing remarks on Spiritualism. This is a greater illusion than even the Polytechnic Ghost. Mr. Dircks might as well urge it as a plea for offering a few passing remarks on Greek! What would he think of a Spiritualist who should write to the *Times* that having been for 40 years a worker in Spiritualism, he hoped the editor would not deem it out of place if he offered a few passing remarks on electricity? How much, or rather how little, Mr. Dircks knows of matters pertaining to Spiritualism, is evident from almost every statement he makes about it, which we are able to check, as for example: "No really scientific man believes in Spiritualism;" "No self-styled Spiritualist dares to come into open daylight to display his legerdemain, or whatever other art it is;" "Nothing is done seemingly without a *séance*;" "Spiritualism has never led to any practical results;" "Every experiment must be in the hands of experts." Now, when a 40 years' worker in science will not take the pains to correctly inform himself concerning matters on which information is so easily accessible, what credit can be given to any other "passing remarks" he may make? It is clear that Mr. Dircks is not so familiar with the facts of Spiritualism or with logic as he is with electricity. A few lessons in Spiritualism and in logic from that unscientific Spiritualist the late Professor De Morgan, might have saved us such a lamentable exhibition of ignorance and rigmarole from one who has "been for upwards of 40 years a worker in science."

We had written thus far when we saw the *Times* of December 31st, in which in reply to Mr. Dircks appeared a

LETTER FROM "A SPIRITUALIST."

After citing a few of the eminent men of science who are avowed Spiritualists, he continues:—

"They are so in virtue of having brought to the investigation of Spiritualism the same scientific methods which they are in the habit of applying in other fields of scientific inquiry. But we all know that the value of any new truth is not to be measured by the number of great names who support it in its infancy. Whether it be good or bad, new or old, useful or otherwise, Spiritualism lives and grows. It is there; and all those who wish to observe its phenomena can do so without any other let or hindrance than that of their own prejudices and foregone conclusions.

"Mr. Dircks is mistaken in supposing that there is any more difficulty in attending *séances* where these phenomena are most easily observed than in attending lectures on ex-

perimental physics where certain conditions of light, &c., are necessary for producing certain effects. A dark room is a necessary appendage to a photographic studio, but no one, unless he were a South Sea Islander, supposes that the picture is the result of jugglery.

"With all true reverence for science, and all due admiration for those, its apostles and teachers, who have not thought it beneath them to place the results of their investigations within the reach of the humblest inquirer, I cannot forbear to remark that life-long application to one branch of science, though it may produce extreme accuracy in modes of working, has also a tendency to narrow the mind and force it into a groove. We trust such men implicitly on their own subjects, but no one would think of consulting the Astronomer Royal, for instance, on a question of pathology, on the grounds that he must be a great scientific authority. Even the learned members of the Geographical Society were obliged to forego some of their opinions in the light of the practical knowledge of the man who found Livingstone.

"Why, then, does a man, calling himself scientific, pretend to an opinion on a subject of which he only claims to 'have heard much in conversation,' but 'never to have seen even a feather stirred?' I, as a humble patient, and, I trust as far as is possible, exact student of the phenomena of Spiritualism, am fully aware of the many illusive appearances presented to the observer; but, from experience, I know it is as wrong to condemn all such as the work of impostors as it would be for a physician to turn his back on a ward of hysteria patients and say with a shrug of his shoulders, 'These people are all actors and impostors; turn them out.' Those who knew better would say that he was unfit for his post. It is so with those who refuse to examine the phenomena of Spiritualism. They dare not, or they are not able to, face the subject. It is unpopular, and it is far easier to ignore than to study it. But that is not scientific. The true man of science dares face the truth, and of such we have many silently working in our midst.

"All Spiritualists are not ranting fanatics nor empty-headed enthusiasts, and those who come among us in the true spirit of scientific inquiry have never, as far as my experience goes, gone away empty, but have returned again and again to the observation of facts which promise to throw so much light on that hitherto abtruse, but most interesting of all objects of study—man.

"A SPIRITUALIST."

LETTER OF MR. D. D. HOME.

Mr. Daniel D. Home contributes the following valuable letter to this controversy :—

" To the Editor of the Times.

" Sir,—Will you allow me space to correct some mis-statements in a letter signed " Henry Dircks, F.C.S.," which appeared in the *Times* of yesterday ?

" It is not true that 'no really scientific man believes in Spiritualism.' To name those only who have spoken out concerning it, two Fellows of the Royal Society are believers in its phenomena ; one—Mr. Crookes—reserves his opinion as to their cause ; the other—Mr. Cromwell Varley—is an out-and-out and ardent Spiritualist ; so also is a man of science, of world-wide reputation—Mr. Alfred Wallace. It is not true that 'Spiritualism shuns the light.' *Séances* are not usually dark ; with myself they always take place in the light, sometimes in broad daylight (save when I am raised and floated in the air). It is not true that 'nothing takes place without a great amount of childish jugglery ;' thousands can attest that no jugglery whatever takes place at *séances*. It is not true that 'little is done without money ;' many mediums, like myself, have never taken a farthing of pay ; though why on earth should mediums not take pay as well as physicists who perform experiments in public, as well as all other men who live by the work of their hands or their brains, or by the exercise of their gifts ?

" Mis-statements such as these are vexatious to persons knowing the truth, and very different in point of mischievous effects from mere ridicule, which is, indeed, harmless ; for instance, had the writer of an article on Spiritualism which appeared in the *Times* of Thursday last, been endowed with the wit of a Sydney Smith his derision would still have fallen innocuously on the facts he so accurately relates. The one thing which could damage Spiritualism would be proof of imposture on the part of a medium in whom Spiritualists reposed confidence, and of proof of imposture the writer of the above-mentioned article has been unable to produce a tittle ; his words are that, though he tried every test he could think of, he could find no trace of it. After his testimony to the marvels he relates, let it, at least, no longer be said that such things never appear under the eye of a sceptic. One observation more and I have done. Mr. Dircks imagines that the uncertainty as to results at a *séance*, contrasting with the certainty of those of the laboratory, tells strongly against Spiritualism, but for this uncertainty there are two sufficient reasons. In the first place, the conditions requisite for spirit-manifestations are not known

to mediums, as the conditions requisite for their experiments are to men of science, and if they were, the will of the invisible beings attracted by the medium must still be taken into account; they may not choose to manifest themselves.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"DANIEL D. HOME.

"24, Motcombe Street, Dec. 28."

MR. C. A. HOOPER.

Mr. C. A. Hooper, proprietor of the automaton chess-player at the Crystal Palace, denies the correctness of the explanation given by Mr. Dircks of this ingenious automaton. This is only worth mentioning, to show that while Mr. Dircks cites the attribution of this performance to spirits by some unnamed credulous Spiritualist as an illustration that "ignorance works miracles," he at the same time in his own person furnishes an illustration that sometimes also ignorance explains the facts said to be mistaken for miracles; and speaks in the name of science in the act of doing so. Scientists can be as rash and blundering in their explanations as any credulous Spiritualist.

The 1st of January brings us as a New Year's Gift the following—

LETTER FROM MR. SERJEANT COX.

"To the Editor of the Times.

"Sir,—Permit me, as a member of the Investigation Committee of the Dialectical Society, whose Report has been so strangely misrepresented, to state briefly the facts.

"Our first object was experiment; our second, to collect the experiences and opinions alike of the supporters and opponents of what we believed to be superstition based upon an imposture.

"In accordance with the practice of all committees, the information thus received from others was printed verbatim in the Appendix. They are individual communications, for the contents of which the Committee are in no way responsible.

"But the Committee for Experiment held no less than 40 meetings under strict conditions. No scientific inquiry was ever more cautiously and exhaustively conducted. Four-fifths of the Committee, with myself, entered upon the inquiry entirely sceptical, and confident that we should detect a fraud or dissipate a delusion.

"The Committee was composed of practical men of science, experienced lawyers, shrewd men of business. It would be impossible to find a more competent jury.

"We ascertained at once that it was not a delusion. There were audible sounds and visible motions.

"Were these the product of fraud? We had no paid medium, and the experiments were conducted in our own homes. But so long as a finger was upon the table, there was no assurance, however improbable, that it was not moved by the involuntary muscular action to which it was attributed by Faraday. It was not until dining tables, which two strong men could raise with difficulty, were moved over spaces varying from three feet to three miles (yards?), without contact or possibility of contact or communication with any of those present, and this repeated at 12 different meetings in various rooms and under the strictest test which ingenuity could devise, that the Committee were compelled reluctantly to the conclusion that a force was exhibited which had not hitherto been recognised in science, and which was not either of the natural forces known to science.

"We witnessed the automatic motion of other lesser articles of furniture repeatedly, but the size and weight of the tables so moved made the experiments with them the more satisfactory.

"We found also that the motions and sounds were directed by intelligence of some kind, for they were often made in obedience to requests both as regards direction and number.

"Thus beginning as hardened sceptics, hoping to detect and expose an imposture, we were compelled by the investigation we had made to report to the society a result wholly unanticipated by it or by ourselves. The conclusions to which we came were in substance these (I have not the very words before me):—That there is a force proceeding from, or in some manner as yet unknown associated with, the human organization, by which heavy bodies are moved and audible sounds made upon them without muscular contact or communication; that this force operates only within a limited distance from such organization, and that it is frequently directed by intelligence.

"Great differences of opinion prevailed among us as to the source of this directing intelligence. Some accepted the spiritual theory. Others agreed with me in attributing it to the intelligence of the medium. It was our impression that the force whose existence had been thus proved to us was the vital force, or nerve force, or soul force, or by whatever name it may be called, which moves, and keeps in motion, and gives its power to the living body; which, in the normal condition of the organism, ends at the extremities of the nerves, but, in rare abnormal conditions and in excess, operates beyond the boundary of the body. This force appears to be either not subject to, or as its exhibition seems to indicate, is antagonistic to the force of gravitation. Accumulated in solid bodies, it produces the motions and sounds which have been too hastily attributed to the agency of spirits of the dead. The directing intelligence is

that of the medium acting under the peculiar mental condition described by Dr. Carpenter as 'unconscious cerebration.'

"Therefore I venture to suggest a more scientific and accurate nomenclature for these phenomena. I proposed to term the force itself 'Psychic Force,' the possessor of it 'a Psychic,' and the science 'Psychism,' and these titles have been generally accepted throughout Europe and in America.

"Subsequently I was present, with Dr. Huggins, F.R.S., and witnessed the important experiments made by Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., with the ingenious instruments by which he tested mechanically and reduced to actual measurement the power of this Psychic Force.

"I have continued the experiments with the same careful tests and open mind, strictly observing the rule which is applicable to science as to law—to accept nothing as evidence which, in a matter affecting life or liberty, I could not confidently submit to a jury and approve a verdict based upon it.

"I have witnessed most of the phenomena on which is based the theory that they are produced by spirits of the dead, who are supposed to be surrounding us. Who would not be happy, indeed, if this fact could be proved beyond a doubt? But I am bound to say that the result of this protracted and patient examination so far has been not merely not to confirm that theory, but to negative it. Not only can I discover no evidence that the spirits of the dead are associated with these phenomena, but all the evidence I have been enabled to collect goes to disprove that conclusion. It may well be that the extended scientific investigation which I hope will now be given to it may assign to this new force some other source or seat than the nervous structure, but I have no doubt that it will be found somewhere in the human organization, for this alone will account for that which is obviously the essential condition of all the phenomena—the presence of one or more persons possessing a specially constituted nervous structure.

"But I may, perhaps, be permitted to remind any scientific men who may undertake the inquiry to which you have properly invited them, that they must approach it with a distinct recognition of the fact that they are dealing with something which is subject to other laws than those to which material substance is subjected; that they cannot apply to it the scalpel, the scales, and the crucible, for it is imponderable, intangible, and its working, its nature, its powers, and its conditions can be ascertained only by observation of its manifestations.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"1, Essex Court, Temple,
"December 31st."

"EDWARD W. COX.

The Psychic Force theory of the learned Serjeant has already and on more than one occasion been examined, and its fallacy exposed in this Magazine, more especially in an article in our last August number, and to which no reply, so far as we are aware, has been attempted. Indeed the evidence published by the Dialectical Society's Committee, of which he was a member, is alone sufficient to refute it. This, we think, was made apparent in the *Times* the following day, January 2nd, in a

LETTER FROM A MEMBER OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE
OF THE DIALECTICAL SOCIETY, AND AN F.G.S.

" To the Editor of the Times.

" Sir,—Kindly permit me, another member of the 'Investigating Committee,' to bring under the notice of your readers one or two of a numerous class of facts, for which my friend Mr. Serjeant Cox has not been able to find room in his *Science of Psychism*.

" In the published Report of the Committee, Mr. Varley, well known as one of the most experienced and skilful manipulators of those subtle forces, magnetism and electricity, says:—' One night in my room there were a number of loud raps. When at length I sat up in bed, I saw a man in the air—a spirit—in military dress. I could see the pattern of the paper on the wall through him. Mrs. Varley did not see it. She was in a peculiar state, and became entranced.' The spirit spoke to me through her.'

" A gentleman asked how that was supposed to be done. Mr. Varley replied:—' While the person is in a trance the spirit controls the body, and acts through the muscles and organs. He told me his name, and said that he had seen his brother in Birmingham, but that what he had to communicate was not understood. He asked me to write a letter to his brother, which I did, and received an answer from Birmingham, " Yes, I know my brother has seen you, for he came to me and was able to make known as much." The gentleman, as I said, was at Birmingham, and I was at Beckenham. This spirit informed me that, when at school in France, he was stabbed. This fact was only known to his eldest surviving brother and his mother. It had been concealed from his father on account of the state of his health. When I narrated this to the survivor he turned pale and confirmed it.' (pp. 160-61.)

" The Master of Lindsay—now Lord Lindsay—well known as a diligent student of natural science, gave his evidence before the Committee, part of which is the following:—' That evening I missed the last train at the Crystal Palace, and had to stay at Norwood, and I got a shake-down on a sofa in Home's room.

I was just going to sleep when I was roused by feeling my pillow slipping from under my head, and I could also feel what seemed to be a fist or hand under it, which was pulling it away. Soon after it ceased. Then I saw at the foot of my sofa a female figure standing *en profile* to me. I asked Home if he saw anything, and he answered, 'A woman looking at me.' Our beds were at right angles to one another, and about twelve feet apart. I saw the features perfectly, and impressed them on my memory. She seemed to be dressed in a long wrap, going down from the shoulders and not gathered in at the waist. Home then said, 'It is my wife; she often comes to me,' and then she seemed to fade away. . . . The next morning, before I went to London, I was looking at some photographs, and I recognized the face I had seen in the room upstairs overnight. I asked Mrs. Jencken who it was, and she said it was Home's wife.' (pp. 207-8.)

"At page 349 of the Report will be found the evidence of M. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, formerly of the Observatory of Paris, Professor of Astronomy of the Polytechnic Association, Academic Officer of the University of France, author of *The Plurality of Inhabited Worlds*, *L'Atmosphère*, &c. I extract the following from his evidence:—

"It has been attempted to explain these phenomena by attributing them to unconscious movements on the part of the medium or the persons in whose presence they occur. Many men whom I greatly esteem, members of the Institute, have adopted this theory, which nevertheless explains but a very small proportion of the facts we are considering, and for the greater number of which it is utterly inadequate to account. The scientific world in France, as elsewhere, is far from being agreed in regard to this subject. The geologist, Delarue, Dr. Puel, so widely known as a physiologist and botanist, and many others, consider these phenomena to be an effect of animal magnetism. My learned teacher and friend, M. Babinet, of the Institute, who has endeavoured with M. E. Liais (now director of the Observatory of Brazil) and several others of my colleagues of the Observatory of Paris, to ascertain their nature and cause, is not fully convinced of the intervention of spirits in their production, though this hypothesis, by which alone certain categories of these phenomena would seem to be explicable, has been adopted by many of our most esteemed *savans*, among others by Dr. Hoeffle, the learned author of *The History of Chymistry* and *The General Encyclopædia*, and by the diligent labourer in the field of astronomic discovery, whose death we have recently had to deplore, M. Herman Goldschmidt, the discoverer of fourteen planets. . . . But although compelled,

in the absence of conclusive *data* in regard to the cause of the so-called spiritual phenomena, to refrain from making any positive affirmation in regard to this part of the subject, I may add that . . . the history of the human race from the earliest ages furnishes instances of coincidences, previsions, and presentiments of warnings experienced in certain critical moments, of apparitions, more or less distinctly seen, which are stated on evidence as trustworthy as that which we possess with regard to any branch of historical tradition to have occurred spontaneously in the experience of all nations, and which may therefore be held to strengthen the presumption of the possibility of communications between incarnate and disincarnate spirits.'

"Such are some of the statements, clear and distinct, by thoughtful, competent observers and witnesses. Upon what grounds does Mr. Serjeant Cox ignore their evidence? Knowing, as I do, the kindly, honest nature of the learned Serjeant, and his thorough love of scientific truths, I can account for this circumstance only by an exaggerated parental instinct for his bantling 'Psychism,' his admiration for which he fondly fancies is shared by all Europe and America. We may safely conclude that the hippopotamus firmly believes her baby to be the loveliest little darling that ever was born.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"January 2."

"F. G. S.

MR. DIRCKS AGAIN.

In a second letter to the *Times*, we think Mr. Dircks does not improve his position. Indeed, he virtually admits the incompetence of science in the premises, when he tells us that, "it is perhaps questionable whether, under any circumstances, there is anything whatever in the so-called Spiritualism that natural philosophy could explain and illustrate." The pith of his letter is the following passage:—

"The true answer to the main point on which my letter is based rests here:—Natural philosophy relates entirely to certain laws of nature, and their practical applications to useful arts. Spiritualism, on the contrary, relates to the supernatural, and is opposed to every known natural law, especially the law of gravity. What comparison, then, is there to be made between the two? What relationship have they? How can the one take cognizance of the other, or of its professors and followers who lend a willing ear to its mysterious mummeries?"

"It is, perhaps, questionable whether under any circumstances there is anything whatever in the so-called Spiritualism that natural philosophy could explain and illustrate. If Mr. Home

can carry burning coals in his hands without being burnt, be stretched eleven inches without dislocation of his joints, and be elevated in the air so as to mark a ceiling with his pencil, here we have at once chymistry, human physiology, and mechanics set at open defiance. Such things are but the type of the class of miracles enunciated by these modern mystics; and it would be folly, therefore to enlarge upon this topic."

The answer to this is, that nevertheless the facts in question occur, and are proved to be facts by the only means by which they can be proved; that is, by observation, experiment, and testimony,—the latter so abundant and consentaneous that, as Professor Challis has said, "either the facts must be admitted, or the possibility of establishing facts by testimony must be given up." If these facts are "opposed to every known natural law," then we must enlarge our knowledge, or correct our conceptions of natural law, or admit that they lie beyond its province—that they are, as they claim to be, supernatural, or spiritual. In that case, all that natural philosophy can do is to ascertain the physical conditions under which this power manifests itself to our perceptions; and this we take it is the true scope and limit of natural philosophy in this inquiry, and is all that it can do for us.

The *Times* of January 4th brings us the most valuable letter of the series. The clear testimony it gives to the facts of Spiritualism, cannot, we should think, fail to command attention and respect from men of science who are willing to approach the subject in that unprejudiced spirit which science claims as pre-eminently its own. It is one of many illustrations that Spiritualism has been thoroughly and practically investigated by "competent hands," has been subjected to the severest tests which men of science could devise, and that it has fairly stood the tests. We have much pleasure in placing on our record the

LETTER OF MR. ALFRED RUSSELL WALLACE.

"To the Editor of the Times.

"Sir,—Having been named by several of your correspondents as one of the scientific men who believe in Spiritualism, you will perhaps allow me to state briefly what amount of evidence has forced the belief upon me. I began the investigation about eight years ago, and I esteem it a fortunate thing that at that time the more marvellous phenomena were far less common and less accessible than they are now, because I was led to experiment largely at my own house, and among friends whom I could trust, and was able to establish to my own satisfaction, by means of a great variety of tests, the occurrence of sounds and movements not traceable to any known or conceivable physical cause.

Having thus become thoroughly familiar with these undoubtedly genuine phenomena, I was able to compare them with the more powerful manifestations of several public mediums, and to recognize an identity of cause in both by means of a number of minute but highly characteristic resemblances. I was also able, by patient observation, to obtain tests of the reality of some of the more curious phenomena which appeared at the time, and still appear to me, to be conclusive. To go into details as to those experiences would require a volume, but I may, perhaps, be permitted briefly to describe one, from notes kept at the time, because it serves as an example of the complete security against deception which often occurs to the patient observer without seeking for it.

"A lady who had seen nothing of the phenomena, asked me and my sister to accompany her to a well-known public medium. We went, and had a sitting alone in the bright light of a summer's day. After a number of the usual raps and movements our lady friend asked if the name of the deceased person she was desirous of communicating with could be spelt out. On receiving an answer in the affirmative, the lady pointed successively to the letters of a printed alphabet while I wrote down those at which three affirmative raps occurred. Neither I nor my sister knew the name the lady wished for, nor even the names of any of her deceased relatives; her own name had not been mentioned, and she had never been near the medium before. The following is exactly what happened, except that I alter the surname, which was a very unusual one, having no authority to publish it. The letters I wrote down were of the following kind:—
y r n e h n o s p m o h t. After the first three—y r n—had been taken down, my friend said, 'This is nonsense, we had better begin again.' Just then her pencil was at e, and raps came, when a thought struck me (having read of, but never witnessed a similar occurrence) and I said 'Please go on, I think I see what is meant.' When the spelling was finished I handed the paper to her, but she could see no meaning in it till I divided it at the first h, and asked her to read each portion backwards, when to her intense astonishment the name of 'Henry Thompson' came out, that of a deceased son, of whom she had wished to hear, correct in every letter. Just about that time I had been hearing *ad nauseam* of the superhuman acuteness of mediums who detect the letters of the name the deluded visitors expect, notwithstanding all their care to pass the pencil over the letters with perfect regularity. This experience, however (for the substantial accuracy of which as above narrated I vouch), was and is, to my mind, a complete disproof of every explanation yet given of the means by which the names of deceased persons

are rapped out. Of course, I do not expect any sceptic, whether scientific or unscientific, to accept such facts, of which I could give many on my testimony, but neither must they expect me, nor the thousands of intelligent men to whom equally conclusive tests have occurred, to accept their short and easy methods of explaining them.

"If I am not occupying too much of your valuable space, I should like to make a few remarks on the misconceptions of many scientific men as to the nature of this enquiry, taking the letters of your correspondent Mr. Dircks as an example. In the first place, he seems to think that it is an argument against the facts being genuine that they cannot all be produced and exhibited at will; and another argument against them, that they cannot be explained by any known laws. But neither can catalepsy, the fall of meteoric stones, nor hydrophobia be produced at will; yet these are all facts, and none the less so that the first is sometimes imitated, the second was once denied, and the symptoms of the third are often greatly exaggerated, while none of them are yet brought under the domain of strict science; yet no one would make this an argument for refusing to investigate these subjects. Again, I should not have expected a scientific man to state, as a reason for not examining it, that Spiritualism 'is opposed to every known natural law, especially the law of gravity,' and that it 'sets chymistry, human physiology, and mechanics at open defiance;' when the facts simply are that the phenomena, if true, depend upon a cause or causes which can overcome or counteract the action of these several forces, just as some of these forces often counteract or overcome others; and this should surely be a strong inducement to a man of science to investigate the subject.

"While not laying any claim myself to the title of 'a really scientific man,' there are some who deserve that epithet who have not yet been mentioned by your correspondents as at the same time Spiritualists. Such I consider the late Dr. Robert Chambers, as well as Dr. Elliotson, Professor William Gregory, of Edinburgh, and Professor Hare, of Philadelphia—all unfortunately deceased; while Dr. Gully, of Malvern, as a scientific physician, and Judge Edmonds, one of the best American lawyers, have had the most ample means of investigation; yet all these not only were convinced of the reality of the most marvellous facts, but also accepted the theory of Modern Spiritualism as the only one which would embrace and account for the facts. I am also acquainted with a living physiologist of high rank as an original investigator, who is an equally firm believer.

"In conclusion I may say that, although I have heard a

great many accusations of imposture, I have never detected it myself; and, although a large proportion of the more extraordinary phenomena are such, that, if impostures, they could only be performed by means of ingenious apparatus or machinery—none has ever been discovered. I consider it no exaggeration to say, that the main facts are now as well established and as easily verifiable as any of the more exceptionable phenomena of nature which are not yet reduced to law. They have a most important bearing on the interpretation of history, which is full of narratives of similar facts, and on the nature of life and intellect, on which physical science throws a very feeble and uncertain light; and it is my firm and deliberate belief that every branch of philosophy must suffer till they are honestly and seriously investigated, and dealt with as constituting an essential portion of the phenomena of human nature.

“I am, Sir, yours obediently,

“ALFRED R. WALLACE.”

This is immediately followed by a

LETTER FROM AN EIGHT YEARS' SPIRITUALIST.

“*To the Editor of the Times.*

“Sir,—No doubt Mr. Dircks is right in saying that the (avowed) point in his former letter to you has been missed, or ignored by his opponents. But is not this circumstance mainly due to the facts that Mr. Dircks indulged in so many observations quite irrelevant to his avowed point, and was so gratuitously and profusely abusive, and so illogical?

“The question he professed to answer was this,—Is Spiritualism worthy the attention of scientific men? In the first paragraph of his former letter he denounces it as ‘legerdemain,’ a charge which he does not attempt to prove, but on the strength of which, *inter alios*, he decides his question in the negative. If this be not a case of *petitio principii*, I am ignorant of the meaning of the term.

“The only real and *bonâ fide* reason that he gives for deciding his question in the negative, is that Spiritualism has done nothing for ‘useful arts.’ Assuming for the nonce that this is true, I ask, parenthetically, is the promotion of so-called useful arts the only or even the highest end of our existence here? I am afraid this reason, so far as it is true, must be admitted as a valid one why scientific men, as such, should not be expected to interest themselves in the subject. It does not specially belong to their department of human knowledge.

“The rest of his argument is based on a tissue of false statements. Confining myself to his last letter,—it is not true that

'no really scientific man believes in Spiritualism.' Many do, both in England and abroad, though in comparatively small numbers. The 'really scientific man' is he who takes facts for his basis and deduces law from them, not he who condemns *à priori* all facts not in accordance with his previous knowledge of laws and his preconceived theories.

"It is not true that 'Spiritualism relates to the supernatural,' nor that it is 'opposed to every known law,' nor even 'to the law of gravity.' The phenomena of Spiritualism are just as subject to natural laws as any other phenomena, though we are as yet very imperfectly acquainted with those laws, Spiritualism being still in its infancy; and though the phenomena may often seem to be at variance with natural laws, this proves nothing. The circulation of the blood, the revolution of the earth round the sun, &c., *ad infinitum*, are all at variance with the natural laws known—not suspected, but known, as positively as anything we now know is known—at the time of their discovery. As to the law of gravity, if I raise an apple from the ground, or with a magnet make a needle leap from the table, I oppose the laws of gravity just as much as the power which at *séances* raises tables, &c., in the air opposes those laws.

"Nor is it necessarily true that 'chymistry, human physiology, and mechanics are set at open defiance' by Mr. Home's carrying fire in his hand, or by his elongations and elevations. It may be that our knowledge of the laws of those sciences, or of the application of those laws, or of the exact circumstances of the cases in point is at fault. We know the facts. We ask scientific men to account for them. To deny them on the faith of known laws is much easier, but scarcely scientific. Mr. Dircks says we 'believe because we cannot explain.' Would it not be at least equally true to say that he disbelieves because he cannot explain?

"Is it fair of Mr. Dircks to condemn our evidence on account of our want of 'elementary scientific knowledge,' while he refuses to enlighten our 'ignorance' by investigating and disproving the genuineness of our phenomena?

"Are we not fellow-men? Is it really beneath him to rescue us (some few millions of us) from this awful delusion? What were the benefits conferred on the human race by a Jenner or a Howard compared to those a Dircks might bestow, if he would but stoop from his scientific heights to study facts?

"It is not true that 'in the event of a proposed rigid investigation' mediums always require 'a certain approved house, room, attendants, furniture, &c.,' and it is very rare that the presence of a 'disbeliever' quite destroys the power of a good medium. Almost any good medium can get some inexplicable

manifestations, though taken blindfold to a house quite unknown to him or her, and though surrounded by unbelievers. But, admitting that Mr. Dircks's statement is true to a modified extent, how is this 'proof of something wrong?' Mediums are human beings; generally highly sensitive. What is there unreasonable in supposing that their psychometric power, or call it what you will, is affected by associations, even with articles of furniture, and still more by a feeling of sympathy or the reverse in those around them.

"It is ridiculously false to say that no advance in our knowledge of Spiritualism has been made in 30 or 40 years; and if it were true, with whom would lie the fault, unless with those wise men who persistently refuse to investigate it? To whom does Mr. Dircks appeal when he says, 'Why not cheapen the modes of illustration?' The modes of illustration are not within our control. To assume otherwise is to beg the question as to imposture, as, indeed, Mr. Dircks does throughout. 'Mummeries,' 'mysteries,' 'gullible,' 'jugglery,' are the terms he uses freely, without any attempt at proving his right to use them. And what does he mean by his charge of 'secrecy?' I have been investigating and following Spiritualism for some 12 years. I never even heard of a professional medium whose *séances* were not perfectly open to all who choose to come, and most non-professional mediums are extremely easy of access. And the only secrecy I ever met with is that many who are Spiritualists keep the fact to themselves, either through fear of ridicule, or through fear that the knowledge of their being Spiritualists might interfere with their usefulness in other spheres.

"I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

"AN EIGHT YEARS' SPIRITUALIST."

The *Times* of Monday, January 6th, has a leading article which we give *in extenso*, not for its intrinsic value but for historical purposes. Its averment that there is no case for scientific inquiry is simply amazing. It is not only in the face of all the evidence, but in the face of the lesson so forcibly urged in the article in its columns of December 26th, and from which all this controversy has arisen. The individual unbelief of the editor, or of any other man, or of any number of men antecedent to full and proper inquiry is of no weight whatever against the facts in the opposite scale,—facts known and attested to, after personal investigation, by so many thousands of intelligent competent witnesses in all parts of the world. If the *Times* article proves anything it is only how dense is the darkness on this subject in the editorial mind of the "leading journal;" and

which it is high time should be enlightened. But let the reader judge: here is

THE "TIMES'" LEADING ARTICLE.

"Many sensible readers we fear will think we owe them some apology for opening our columns to a controversy on such a subject as Spiritualism, and thus treating as an open or debatable question what should rather be dismissed at once as either an imposture or a delusion. But even an imposture may call for unmasking, and popular delusions, however absurd, are often too important to be neglected by the wiser portion of mankind. It is, we suppose, on these grounds, we are told that 'men of science,' instead of treating Spiritualism with derision or contempt, ought to study its phenomena with impartial attention, and prepare themselves either to expose deceit or to acknowledge facts. On the other side, however, it is reasonably argued that before scientific men can be expected to investigate alleged phenomena, it must be shown that such phenomena are real enough and extraordinary enough to deserve inquiry. Thus, in fact, has arisen the question of 'Spiritualism *v.* Science,' under which heading we have allowed correspondents of all shades of belief, or disbelief, to relate their experience or state their views. Is there really any case for scientific investigation in this matter? Would it have been allowable, for instance, to ask Professor Faraday to come and verify for himself the manifestations of Spiritualism, or would it have been an insult to invite him to any such absurdity? Is there, in reality, anything, as lawyers would say, to go to a jury with? Well, on the one hand we have abundance of alleged experience which can hardly be called evidence, and a few depositions of a more notable and impressive character. On the other hand, we have many accounts of convicted impostors, and many authentic reports of precisely such disappointments or discoveries as we should be led to expect.

"What, however, is Spiritualism? We ask that important question with little hope of getting a conclusive answer, for our readers will have seen during the last few days how very various are the impressions of Spiritualists themselves. Originally, no doubt, as the name itself implies, Spiritualism meant a certain dealing, through some mysterious agencies, with the spirits of the dead, which were summoned to communicate with the living. This is nothing but the old theory of ghosts and apparitions reduced to a kind of practice, by which spirits, instead of appearing at their own discretion, are raised at will by the call of others. Probably the believers in Spiritualism as thus defined do not include many scientific men; but other views of the

matter have been placed before us. One correspondent is content to observe that he has witnessed phenomena which could not be attributed to any natural causes. Another expresses his conviction that certain phenomena are really due to the operation of a force hitherto unsuspected, but entering into the agencies of nature like any other force. As this is, perhaps, the least incredible of all the hypotheses, we may as well consider it first, especially as the reader of Lord Lytton's novels will recognize in it a familiar and almost attractive assumption. It is said, then, that the force of the human will, which can put the fingers of the hand in motion at pleasure, can occasionally and under certain circumstances be exerted beyond the limits of the body, and with such material effect as to move inanimate objects to an extent, at any rate, far exceeding the mechanical force employed. A number of persons, being duly gifted and in a proper state of 'cerebration,' might thus, we are told, put in motion a heavy dining table and drive it over a considerable space. Now, we must avow that, for our own part, we do not believe the united 'wills' of all the nine hundred millions of the earth's population could ever be made to move a single wine-glass; but the possibility of such a force may be imagined with less outrage to reason than is involved in certain other Spiritualist theories, and can easily be brought to proof.

"Of the other alleged phenomena of Spiritualism, it is difficult to speak with even this amount of gravity. They are for the most part exhibited under conditions either plainly suggestive of imposture or clearly consistent with delusion. Stipulations for a dark room, concerted arrangements of furniture, and a company predisposed by credulity to the reception of impressions are not terms likely to commend themselves to the students of physical science. The phenomena themselves, too, are mostly incompatible with any serious conception of spiritual revelations, and, at the same time, exactly adapted to the purposes of human operators. Raps given under the table, chairs tossed about the room, strange noises, and mysterious movements have been the stock features of all such stories from the days of the Cock Lane Ghost to the present time. Such tricks are easily played, and the manifestations are easily magnified by a credulous or imaginative mind. When we hear from witnesses neither imaginative nor credulous that they have really heard or seen what they could not tell how to explain, we may believe them without the least belief in the truth or reality of Spiritualism. Exactly the same things have been said of Indian jugglers or Egyptian magicians. When, again, we are told that Spiritualism, having existed for 40 years, must have a basis of truth, we can only reply that magic without the least basis of

truth existed and was fully believed in for more than ten times that period. Its theory was perfectly simple, being founded on the belief, universally prevailing, that the elements were peopled with certain spirits or superhuman natures which could, by the application of certain laws, be made to perform the bidder's will. Magical art consisted in the mastery of these laws, and the command consequently attained over the powers of the air, the earth, or the sea. The observance of certain forms, the burning of certain essences, and the utterance of certain words called the spirit or the 'genii' to the presence of the performer, and it is curious to remark how elaborately the study must have been pursued. The magician of Oriental tales before exercising his art invariably consults his 'books,' and sometimes spends days in the investigation. We laugh at such pretensions now, but they were neither ridiculous nor incredible in times when the existence of the spirits concerned was never called in question. It was everywhere believed that natures endowed with more than human faculties were among the beings of the world, and from that conviction to the conception of an art by which they might be controlled the passage was easy. But this does not touch the essence of Spiritualistic pretensions.

"We are told either that spirits from the unseen world may be called to communicate with living men and women, or that a force hitherto unknown may be exerted with material effect upon inanimate bodies; and then we are asked why men of science will not apply themselves to the investigation of such claims. In the controversy which has been raised in our columns due allowance has, perhaps, not been made for the conditions of the problem; but a sufficient answer to the demand for a scientific inquiry is that the proposals must come in a less ambiguous or objectionable shape. The "medium" must be content with any apartment offered for the purpose, with an unbelieving audience, and with conditions generally devised to prevent even the possibility of deception or misapprehension. The employer of 'Psychic Force' must accept similar terms, which, indeed, in his case, as there can be no 'susceptibilities' involved, should be readily welcomed. We have been warned not to apply the measures of an exact or advanced science to discoveries possibly just dawning upon mankind, but that advice would befit only an ulterior stage of the inquiry. We cannot be too sceptical, too scrutinizing, or too precise in ascertaining facts, though it may be otherwise when we come to explanations. Let us first be positively assured that a spirit has been evoked, or that a dining table has been moved by a mere effort of volition on the part of an operator. When the facts have been once established Science may be fairly called upon to consider their import."

Besides this tissue of dreary platitudes, inaccurate statements, unproved assumptions, and oft-refuted sophistries, there is the following—

LETTER FROM DR. CAMERON.

" To the Editor of the Times.

" Sir,—I am a man accustomed to close and careful examination of intricate matters. I studied Spiritualism for about two years with great care, and, I believe, with perfect coolness and impartiality of mind. I saw it in almost all its phases. I saw its manifestations in private and in public, in the light and in the dark; and though there is much that is childish, though many of the believers are most credulous and would accept almost anything coming in the name of the 'Dear Spirits,' and though in many of the dark *séances* there was abundant room for trick, if trick were necessary, I was yet compelled to believe that there was a power at work unknown to Science, and which was not under the control of the so-called medium.

" I do not, for what seem to me good reasons, believe that the spirits of our departed fellow-creatures are the agents in all this, but I have no explanation of my own to offer. Faraday's unconscious muscular action theory was quite unworthy of such a mind as his. Dr. Carpenter's unconscious cerebration may explain a few phenomena, as may also Serjeant Cox's Psychic Force, but there is much, very much, in Spiritualism that none of these explanations touch at all; and, as the new faith has now spread so widely, and has done so much mischief to many, the time has, I agree with your reporter in thinking, fully come when even our greatest scientists may, without loss of dignity, consent to become as little children, that they may learn something of this strange thing before they pronounce upon it; for many think with me that men who have fairly won great names by scientific discovery rather detract from than add to their reputation by speaking dogmatically concerning that of which they are practically in utter ignorance.

" I am, Sir, yours obediently,

" Derby, Jan. 3."

" FENTON CAMERON, M.D.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

So ends abruptly this correspondence (we can hardly call it controversy) in the *Times* concerning "Spiritualism and Science." As remarked by the Rev. Archer Gurney, in the opening sentences of a letter in the *Spectator* of January 11th, "The recent correspondence in the *Times* on Spiritualism is not a little singular. It can scarcely have escaped the observation

of cursory readers that the affirmative letters, including Mr. Wallace's, were powerful and the negative weak." Like previous controversies in the *Morning Star* and the *Morning Advertiser*, it has helped to make the facts of Spiritualism more widely known, and has shown that those who accept it are ready to give a reason for the faith that is in them, and also how little our "scientific men" have to say for themselves when publicly challenged with having "in this matter signally failed to do their duty by the public, which looks to them for its facts."

There are a few letters we have thought it not worth our space and the reader's time to quote. The secretary of the Dialectical Society gives some explanations as to the report of its Committee. Mr. Hain Friswell vindicates the genuineness of the manifestations witnessed by him at Mrs. Marshall's, as given by him in evidence before the Committee of the Dialectical Society. "Observer" (who has evidently observed very little of Spiritualism) sends an account of one of the Sunday services at the Cavendish Rooms, which looks very like a caricature; and Mr. John Algernon Clarke sends an explanation of a clever trick performed by a conjuror named Maskelyne which Mr. Bradlaugh in his recent discussion with Mr. Burns had cited as more inexplicable than any of the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism.

It must, we think, be admitted that men of science have shown no great eagerness in responding to the call which the *Times* has made on them, perhaps, because they are sensible of their own impotence in the matter, and that hitherto their efforts in that line have hardly equalled what might have been expected of them. It is now high time that this constant piteous appeal to them by sceptics and by the press, "Come over and help us," should end. If the public still continues to "look to them for its facts," they should either do their duty by the public, by showing that confidence to be well founded, which as the *Times* admits they have not done; or they should at once frankly admit that the subject lies beyond their province, and that they are incompetent to deal with it. Why should the public like a helpless baby, look to them for its facts? Can it not look to itself for the facts? Why should it be Professor-ridden, any more than priest-ridden? Has it neither eyes, nor ears, nor understanding? Spiritualists will welcome, as they have always welcomed scientific investigation, but as heretofore they will "go on their way rejoicing," either in the company of a large accession of men of science, or without it; with them if they may, without them if they must. Spiritualism will not wait for scientists to come loitering in at the eleventh hour, after leaving it to others to bear the burden and heat of the day.

If they mean to work even at this late hour, there is still room and welcome for them, but let them do so without more delay. "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Spiritualism has for a quarter of a century got on pretty well, with little help from them, and it will continue to progress in the future as it has in the past, whether they help or hinder. The doughty champions who in the name of science have felt so confident of an easy victory over Spiritualism, have found themselves unhorsed in the encounter. Spiritualism holds, and means to keep possession of the field.

SPIRIT-FACES.

PERHAPS at no time since the advent of modern Spiritualism have the physical manifestations of spirits been so abundant and marvellous as now. To present anything like a complete record of them would be impossible. All that we as journalists can do is to give reports of those which have some feature of special interest, or which have been drawn up with more than usual care, or are more than usually well attested, and particularly when these manifestations are representative of a class of kindred nature.

The appearance of spirit forms and faces is now common at public *séances* in the metropolis, and especially at those of Herne and Williams, Mrs. Holmes, and Miss Florence Cook. The latter young lady, of whom we recently presented a short autobiographical sketch, is an unprofessional medium, and as we have not been privileged to attend her *séances*, we are unable to report of them from personal observation; but we lately quoted an account of one of them from the *Daily Telegraph*, written by its "own commissioner," and we present, from the *Spiritualist* of December 15th, the following account of—

A SEANCE WITH MISS FLORENCE COOK.

"On Wednesday evening, December 4th, a *séance* was held at Mr. Cook's, under good test conditions. The visitors present were Mrs. Corner; Miss Till; Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Manchester; Mr. A. L. Henderson, of 49, King William Street, London Bridge; Mr. Samuel Guppy, 1, Morland Villas, Highbury Hill Park, N; and Mr. W. H. Harrison, Herne Hill.

"At the close of the *séance* the following account of it was drawn up, Mr. Guppy dictating the first two or three sentences, and Mr. Henderson most of the others; but the strict accuracy of every sentence was considered and passed unanimously before

it was written, and the measurements given in the document are exact, as they were made on the spot with a measuring tape:—

“ ‘ We, the undersigned, had the pleasure of being present at a spiritual *séance* at Mr. Henry Cook's, Hackney, on Wednesday evening, December 4th, 1872. Miss Cook, after entering the cabinet, was tied, by some power, at the wrists, round the neck and round the waist, to the back of her chair, with thread. After the examination and sealing of every perceptible knot by Mr. Henderson, he, at his own suggestion, and with the assent of the medium, tied a thread round the side cross-bar and round the front left leg of the chair; the thread was then brought under the door to the outside of the cabinet, and fastened to the carpet by a common pin, in a good light. Thus the thread could have no play up and down the leg of the chair, consequently the chair could not be moved more than 2 inches without breaking away from the pin which held the thread outside. The other thread was knotted close to each of the wrists of the medium, and sealed, so that the hands could not be passed through the loop round each wrist. The doors were shut, and soon afterwards a small hand, followed by a large one, appeared; next came a face calling itself “Katie, the spirit,” in full gaslight; she was clearly seen by all present, she much resembled the medium in appearance, and was surrounded with white drapery. The beautiful white face then went away, and in three or four minutes the same features reappeared, nearly black all over; the “whites” of the eyes were also nearly black, the pupils being blacker still. It was a living face, and talked to us all in full light. This dark face went away, and in less than three minutes—most likely two minutes—the white face, perfect as before, reappeared, and talked to us. She threw out two oranges, one to Mr. Guppy, and the other to Mr. Henderson. Then there was a breakage in the *séance*, and at the second sitting Katie appeared as before. The thread was so close round the wrists of the medium, as to cut into the flesh, so that the knots on each arm could not be sealed without burning her. One of the knots near the waist was tied with thread by Mr. Henderson. A piece of thread was tied by Mr. Henderson to three or four parts of the thread about the medium, and the end of this second thread was passed under the bottom of the door, and held all through the *séance* by Mr. Henderson. He proposed the test, and the medium assented to it at once, the object being to prove that she did not get upon the chair. The distance from the seat of the chair to the top of Miss Cook's head, when seated, is 31 inches. The distance from the seat of the chair to the bottom of the opening of the cabinet at which the faces appear is 51 inches, so that the distance from the top of her head to the bottom of the opening in the cabinet is 20 inches. During the sitting Mr. Henderson said he felt tugs at the thread he held not exceeding 6 inches. When Mr. Blackburn clasped it, he said he felt tugs not exceeding 2 or 3 inches. Katie said that every time she drew power from the medium, the medium gave a jerk. At the end of each sitting, the seals and knots were found to be perfect, and Mr. Henderson has them now in his possession, and says he will show them to anybody who will call upon him. Before the *séance* Mr. Henderson was in the room by himself examining the cabinet as long as he pleased, and he said that he was perfectly satisfied with its *bonâ fide* character.

“ ‘ AMELIA CORNER.	A. L. HENDERSON.	ELIZA TILL.
“ ‘ SAMUEL GUPPY.	HENRY COOK.	WILLIAM H. HARRISON.’
“ ‘ CHARLES BLACKBURN.	EMMA COOK.	

“ For some weeks past Mr Blackburn had objected to the rope-tying method as not being satisfactory to sceptical people, so narrow black tape was adopted. Then, at his desire, thread was substituted, with which Mr. Henderson and others all felt perfectly satisfied, as proving to them the medium's integrity. It was the first time thread had ever been used.

"In the *séance* just described, after the medium had been tied to her chair with a short length of fine thread, Mr. Henderson asked permission to tie another thread, where he pleased, to the fastenings already made. This he did, tying his thread at places close behind the medium's back to the other thread which held her to the chair. The end of his thread he passed under the door, and held in his hand during the *séance*, sitting holding it in a 'bird-catching' attitude, leaning forward, and looking at the opening in the cabinet, where Katie soon appeared with a laughing face, and nodded at him.

"Mr. Henderson, who is somewhat noted among Spiritualists for his intense scepticism, attended in a very friendly state of mind, and did not attempt to alter the usual conditions without first asking permission, hence he had a good *séance*.

"The light at these *séances* is always strong, consisting of a gas flame, turned full on, and the room is small. But at the second part of this *séance* a paraffin lamp with a burner of larger size than usual was also used, so that with the two flames the room was brilliantly lighted. The faces bore the light for several minutes."

A SPIRIT-FACE IDENTIFIED BY THREE WITNESSES.—DIRECT
SPIRIT-WRITING.

Mr. Stanhope Templeman Speer, M.D., 13, Alexander Road, Finchley Road, N.W., describes a *séance* with Mr. Holmes, at which were present himself and wife, his brother-in-law, and an M.A., and Mr. James Burns. At this *séance*, he tells us, a face was seen which "was instantly and simultaneously recognised by three of the party as that of their departed relative, as he appeared when on his death-bed; it remained for a length of time within four feet of us; and, on being requested to do so, advanced outside the aperture and then retreated. On being asked whether it could communicate by writing, and an answer in the affirmative being given, a slate and pencil was handed, taken in, and then handed out, covered on both sides with a message which, under ordinary circumstances, would have taken five times the length of time to write during which the message had actually been written by this extraordinary agency."

"M.A." also writes an independent account, fully confirmatory of the above. He says:—

"We sat close round the table, so that the little aperture through which the faces are shown was well within view—so clearly, indeed, that I could see the faces float upwards to the ceiling to rematerialise themselves, and could even trace their gradual formation. Under these circumstances, with a good

light, and at a distance of only a few feet from our own faces, we saw the face of a most intimate and dear relation of three of the sitters. Mistake there could be none. I never saw him in the flesh, but I have seen his portrait; and the resemblance, even to one who did not know him, is unmistakable. To those who had known and loved him here, the vivid return of his familiar features was most startling and affecting. He was there, as real to all appearance as though the body had been resuscitated and quickened into new life. Even the hand—a most beautifully-formed one, which had been his characteristic in life—was there. No test was wanting to convince us all that we were in the presence of one of the most remarkable phenomena that have occurred even in this age of marvels."

MR. SERJEANT COX ENQUIRES OF PSYCHIC FORCE, "ARE YOU MY UNCLE, ROBERT COX?"

In *Human Nature* for January, in an article on "Spirit Faces and Direct Writing," is an account of a *séance*, at which Mr. Serjeant Cox was present, and the following incident occurred:—

"The very well defined head of an old gentleman appeared, which, after a few moments, Mr. Serjeant Cox recognised as the likeness of a deceased relative. Mr. Cox addressed it thus:—'Are you my uncle, Robert Cox?' The spirit bowed in the affirmative. It receded and came back a number of times, after which the temporary door was removed, and Mr. Holmes and Miss Cook went inside, that the spirit, Katey King, might manifest. Soon Miss Cook was in a deep trance in an easy chair, and the spirit Robert Cox returned to the aperture repeatedly, and held his face in every conceivable position, so that his identity was established to an absolute certainty."

As the same incident was previously reported in the *Medium*, and its accuracy has not been impugned, we may assume it to be correct; and we cannot but feel puzzled at the strange behaviour of Psychic Force and Mr. Serjeant Cox on this occasion. It is strange that Psychic Force should take the form of "the human face divine" at all; but it is still more strange that it should here assume "the very well defined head of an old gentleman." One might reasonably have expected it to have rather appeared as a baby—Cox's baby—as it is his offspring, and not yet two years old. It is a wise father that knows his own child, and to this height of wisdom Mr. Serjeant Cox had not attained on the evening in question, for he did not know his own bantling when he saw it, but by a strange hallucination he (as the reporter tells us with a fine touch of irony) only

"recognised it as the likeness of a deceased relative." Nature and Fate seem to have urged their course in vain; there was no yearning of the parental heart, and—

O Day and Night, but this is wondrous strange!

Mr. Serjeant Cox actually mistook his little two-year-old darling for—

O, my prophetic soul!—"my uncle!"

Considering the tender age of the little innocent it is perhaps not so surprising that he should have fallen into the same mistake, and that when asked—"Are you my uncle, Robert Cox?" he "bowed in the affirmative;" and even "held his face in every conceivable position, so that his identity was considered an established certainty;" thereby confirming Mr. Serjeant Cox in his delusion that he was addressing the "old gentleman," "my uncle, Robert Cox."

To have been consistent, Mr. Serjeant Cox should have interrogated the phantom in terms like these—

"Thou comest in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee:
I'll call thee Nerve-Atmosphere,
Automatic Cerebration, Psychic Force.
O answer me! Let me not burst in ignorance!
What may this mean?"

To which the illustrious stranger might fitly have rejoined—

"Dost thou not know me, father?
I am Psychic Force!"

But perhaps in the question actually propounded by him, Mr. Serjeant Cox may have been an "impressionist medium," speaking wiser than he knew. As Psychic Force springs at once in full consciousness from the nervous structure of the medium, like Minerva from the brain of Jove, it may have been wiser than its sire, and have inspired him with the question to confirm his better second thought, and correct his former aberration by responding to this effect.

"List! list, O list!
'Tis given out that I am Psychic Force,
Sprung from the nerves' extremities;
Bearing all characteristics of the medium,
Thus is the public ear rankly abused.
But know that I who speak to thee in truth,
Am thy paternal uncle: one who bore
The honoured name of Cox."

If Mr. Serjeant Cox doubts the correctness of this construction, let him again interrogate his "deceased relative" the "old gentleman," "my uncle, Robert Cox," who, we feel confident will once more bow in the affirmative, and establish his identity "to an absolute certainty."

The learned Serjeant, it would seem, is rather apt to be confused as to identity. In a little work he published about a year ago, and which we had the pleasure of reviewing, he all through speaks of himself as "Science,"—a delusion in its way quite as extraordinary as that on which we have been commenting; and a mistake which could be made by no one but himself.

In his recent letter to the *Times* Mr. Serjeant Cox says:—"Not only can I discover no evidence that the spirits of the dead are associated with these phenomena, but all the evidence I have been enabled to collect goes to disprove that conclusion." It is a pity that Mr. Serjeant Cox did not append a postscript or a foot-note to the above passage, relating the little incident we have quoted, and adding a few others we wot of which he has witnessed during his protracted investigations, and which he has been enabled to collect, as they might have served to illustrate the conclusion to which in print he has arrived. As, however, the second edition of his book is now exhausted, as we learn, he is perhaps reserving all these facts for a third edition; we await their publication with interest. If we might for the nonce assume the professional style with which the learned Serjeant is so well acquainted, we would venture to address him thus—"Now, sir, speak up; remember that in giving your evidence you are required to state all the facts in the case to which you can testify of your own knowledge. You are bound not only to speak the truth, but the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

WHAT IS THE MODE OF OPERATION IN THE PRODUCTION OF SPIRIT-FACES?

That the elements or the force used by spirits in these and other manifestations is drawn from the organization of the medium, was well known to Spiritualists long before Mr. Serjeant Cox began his "discoveries." It has been suggested that the mould of the spirit-hands and faces that are seen at *séances* are taken from the hands and face of the medium, and that this accounts for the likeness between them which is occasionally seen. A body faintly luminous is sometimes seen rising out of the body of the medium, both bodies being connected by luminous threads. When this has been witnessed, the medium has generally (if not always) been entranced; on returning to normal consciousness, the medium generally feels more or less exhaustion, and is sensible that some power or virtue has gone out of him. These facts may give a clue to the means by which spirits operate in these manifestations. They explain how imperfect forms appear;—the hand, or the hand

and arm only, or the face, or the head and bust." This building up of the form by a process of spiritual art, having been actually and at different times witnessed at various stages of it. They may also help to explain the phenomena of "the double," for if the spirit either passes through the periphery of the medium, or extracts the elements of the materialized spirit-form from the body of the medium, it may reasonably be expected to resemble it in shape and feature. But we must also take into account the *unlikeness* to the medium which is more frequently apparent, in form, feature, age, sex, complexion, and sometimes even in colour. The general conclusion from the whole would seem to be that, while the plastic material is drawn from the medium as a mould, this is formed into the shape, features, complexion, &c., desired by the spirit, more or less successfully according to his intelligence and power, and the favourable or unfavourable conditions which may be presented. This, however, may be only one of the methods of their production. In other instances, and these are probably the more frequent, it would seem that the spiritual body of the spirit is itself clothed upon and made visible with the elements drawn from the persons present, and especially from the medium. When the forms are statuesque in appearance, and the faces very pale and death-like, the first-named method is probably adopted; when on the contrary, they are full of life, mobility and expression, the latter method would seem to be employed. Both methods seem to be exemplified in the spirit-photographs. These matters should be carefully and systematically investigated. They offer an inviting field for scientific exploration, and one more promising than speculations on the development of men from ascidian skin-bags, or the unconscious evolution from the nervous structure of the "Psychic" of spiritual beings who communicate with us, and are recognised as our departed friends and kindred. If instead of inventing new names and fantastic theories in relation to this subject, men of science would, in the present stage of their enquiry, be content with observing and comparing facts, noting conditions, and recording results, they might help us to a better understanding of these mysteries, and occupy, perhaps, a less pretentious, but certainly a more useful and honourable position, and one they should be peculiarly well qualified to fill.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

LETTER OF HORTENSE TO HER SON—THE LATE EMPEROR.

THE following is from the *Echo* of January 16th, 1873 :—

“Just before her death, Hortense de Beauharnais, wrote the following letter to her son, Napoleon III. :—

“‘My dear Son,—I am about to undergo an operation, which has become absolutely necessary. In case it should not terminate successfully, I send you in this letter my blessing. We shall meet again—shall we not?—in a better world, where, God grant, you may come to join me as late as possible. And you will believe that, in quitting this world, I regret only leaving yourself, and your fond affectionate disposition, which alone has given any charm to my existence. This will be a consolation for you, dearest, to reflect that, by your attentions, you have rendered your mother as happy as circumstances would allow her to be. You will think also of all my affection for you, and this will inspire you with courage. Think upon this, and we shall always have a tender feeling for all that passes in this world below, and that, assuredly, we shall all meet again. Reflect upon this consolatory idea; it is one which is too necessary not to be true. I press you to my heart; I am calm, perfectly resigned, and I would still hope that we may meet again, even in this world.—Your affectionate mother,

“‘April 3, 1837.”’

“‘HORTENSE.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT IN FAVOUR OF IMMORTALITY.

“Yes! this is the moral argument that makes it almost easy to believe in a life beyond the tomb. It is the memory of the nameless martyrs; it is the sight of such a glorious being as this suddenly shutting the book of his life and disappearing, suddenly quitting the field and giving in his commission to the King,—that suggests the inevitable question,—And what has the King done with them?—what has become of them? What has *become* of the vital energy that gave animation and vitality to these limbs and organs now still and quiet in the grave? Nothing ever perishes;—science, the highest, the deepest science of our time, has settled that for us. Where, then, is the mighty force that bound all these dead atoms together, that made a unity of these discordancies,—that became sight in the eye, hearing in the ear, eloquence on the tongue, thought in the brain, emotion in the heart, heat in the blood, and energy in all things? I

say, it '*became*' all these things; for it was unity and not diversity that animated the man, and made these varied functions only the instruments of a mysterious unit-force. Where is that unity?—where the one, conscious intelligent, planning, loving being, who stood behind these faculties and organs and used them at his will? Gone; but whither? Nothing perishes: where then is it—or he? In the grave the atoms lie,—the dust of the brain, the film of the eye, the rent chord of the musical tongue, the broken heart,—a series of deserted instruments; but do not tell me the man lies there;—the power, the unit that made all harmonious and energetic, is away,—the bird has flown with its song to fairer skies, and this is but the empty broken cage."—*Sermon on the Death of Sir John Bowring, by the Rev. JOHN PAGE HOPPS.*

THE "NORTH WILTS HERALD" ON SPIRITUALISM AND INSANITY.

The *North Wilts Herald* of December 28th, last, has the following:—

"Very recently the wife of a Devonshire clergyman was placed in a lunatic asylum, though since liberated by the Lord Chancellor, on the certificate of two medical men on the ground that she was a lunatic because a believer in Spiritualism. Those, however, who have given the matter a fair consideration, are aware that Spiritualism is not the peculiar belief of here and there a few eccentric persons. It is believed in by men and women not only in America and England, but all over the Continent; and by persons of the highest culture and the most unquestioned moral character, whose testimony on any other subject would be received with the most implicit deference and belief. This is the one great difficulty we have always seen in ignoring what Spiritualists have to say. Men and women whose thought, culture, and refinement, have an influence upon all around them, and whose opinions are eagerly sought after on general topics, can hardly be deemed insane the moment they treat of a subject which it is confessed even our philosophers have not taken the trouble to comprehend. It may be, and it is urged, that belief in Spiritualism is a kind of monomania, but if belief in Spiritualism is of itself a sufficient warrant for drawing the conclusion that the persons holding it are insane, then all who believe in the continuity of miraculous power are in a questionable position, while Roman Catholics, the Latter Day Saints (or Mormons), and the members of the Catholic and Apostolic Church (the Irvingites), are, logically speaking, insane. Grant, however, for one moment, that Spiritualism—that is to say, the

belief in the intercourse between departed spirits and those who still remain on earth, together with the continuous action of spiritual agency in our earthly sphere—makes great demands on our credulity, it is really not half so incredible or suggestive of insanity as are the theories of atheists, deists, pantheists, and secularists, and yet there is no medical man living who would venture to officially authorise the detention in a mad-house of any person holding these views upon the pure ground of holding them. On this view of the case, therefore, it is desirable for the public welfare that the position of Spiritualism should be defined, for if the solitary fact of an avowed belief in Spiritualism is held to be sufficient ground for the confinement of the believer, although in all other respects the individual in question may give every sign of sanity that the most scientific can desire, then it is only necessary to prove that a person holds opinions altogether contrary to those which obtain in general society, and detention as a lunatic may follow. We wish, however, to be distinctly understood as not asserting that Spiritualism may not, under certain circumstances, lead to insanity. Indeed, it has done so, but the same charge may be laid against almost every form of religion, and especially against what is known as High Calvinism. There is not a lunatic asylum in the country that does not contain inmates whose minds have become affected by some religious delusion, especially those who have dwelt upon the terrible doctrine that some are from eternity predestinated to be saved, and others predestinated to be damned. Yet who has the hardihood to condemn religion because a few infatuated and feeble-minded persons have distorted the glorious teachings of Scripture until their minds are overwhelmed by the terrible pictures which they have drawn from truths intended to bless rather than curse mankind. It is but fair also to state that Spiritualism has had to suffer from the opinions of some who profess it, in America some of the most extreme religionists, or rather non-religionists, being among its advocates. This is a misfortune, though it ought not to overpower a truth. Then, again, it is a fact that quacks and impostors have practised deceptions for gain among credulous persons, and so brought discredit upon what is real and genuine. Remembering these facts, having given attention to the subject, and attended some remarkable *séances*, we await with interest the discussion which the review in the *Times* of Thursday is sure to produce. We offer no opinion ourselves—we cannot do so. To assert that Spiritualism is an established fact would be to say more than we could vouch for: to declare it a delusion and imposture would be to doubt the existence of what we have seen and felt; and, further, to doubt the *bonâ fides* of some of our most esteemed friends. This state of mind

is by no means singular, there are thousands who so think, and if the *Times* should be the means of initiating an investigation into what is at present maligned and unfairly treated, the interests of science as well as the cause of independent thought will be served, and an addition made to the existing stores of human knowledge."

SPIRITUALISM IN MAIDSTONE.

At the monthly meeting of the Maidstone and Mid-Kent National History and Philosophical Society, held at Chillington Manor House, near Maidstone, Tuesday, December 31st, Dr. Monckton in the chair, Thomas Grant, Esq., of Maidstone, read a paper entitled, "A Scientific View of Modern Spiritualism," in which he traced its history and classified its phenomena. The *South Eastern Gazette* of January 4th, in its report, says that Mr. Grant riveted the attention of a numerous audience. A vigorous discussion ensued, and at the close, a unanimous vote of thanks was given to Mr. Grant for his able paper. Several spirit-drawings, portraits, and other objects of interest in connection with the subject were exhibited. We are glad to learn that Mr. Grant's essay is to be published.

SPIRITUAL RHABDOMANCY.—NOVEL APPLICATION OF THE DIVINING ROD.

Mr. W. Wallace, writing from Glasgow, says:—

"On arriving at Glasgow, I was much amused by finding the Spiritualists generally practising rhabdomancy, or divination by a wand. The usual method here is for two persons to hold a rod in their hands, and it points to letters in the alphabet, and thus messages are spelt out frequently. It is used to point out persons who shall sit in the circle for the time being, and which seat they shall occupy. When the conditions thus indicated are strictly adhered to, a pencil is sometimes attached to the end of the rod, and writing is often obtained."

MATERIALISM.

Mr. D. Hooper, of Trinity Square, London, surgeon, in the *Lancet*, of 28th December, 1872, alluding to the "extreme jealousy of scientific men in allowing anything like a metaphysical argument in proof of the separate existence of the soul," states that Dr. Maudsley, of Birmingham, believes that "Christianity has done more harm than good in the world." Mr.

Hooper deems it fortunate that the Almighty does not hand over the world to be governed "by philosophers, and the lesser swells who follow their lead; if He did, we should soon find ourselves in chaos." Mr. Hooper "cannot see how, on the evolutionist and materialistic view, we can explain the triumph of mind and matter at the hour of death; that when, *in extremis*, the mind is clearer, more active than ever; that, with matter at its worst we find mind at its best, also that students work best when below par, not in robust health." He asks, "How can the will prevent an epileptic attack, and constrain and drag along a reluctant body?" He states, that "in insanity, the brain is, in the worst cases, often sound." He believes, "that the theologians and followers of St. Thomas Aquinas have the best of it, and the evolutionists and materialists have failed to establish their new doctrines." If Mr. Hooper would study the 13 volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine*, his faith would be increased considerably as to future existence.

EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCE OF MESMERIC POWER.

"A curious case of mesmerism is recorded by the civil surgeon of Hoshhungabad. A young woman, named Nunnee, aged 24, was married some 12 years ago; she, however, did not go to her husband's house for two years afterwards. After staying with him for eight days she suddenly became insensible, and remained so for two or three days. She was taken back to her mother and soon got well. Then follows a very remarkable history. During the next four or five years she never entered her husband's house without falling insensible, and remaining so. He was very kind and attentive to her; she liked him, but whenever he came into her presence she at once sank into this state. This went on till she became emaciated and exhausted, and at last her parents applied to the court for a separate maintenance for her. While she was in court the husband entered, and she instantly became insensible, and was carried to the hospital, where the case was carefully attended to by Dr. Cullen, in March this year. While in this state her pulse was even, breathing soft, her body pliant, but she could eat nothing. Experiments were carefully made to see if there was no trick about it. While she was in bed, her husband was muffled up, and made to walk through the ward. She said she felt he was near her, and she was by no means well, but had not seen him anywhere about. Next day this experiment was repeated, and she actually became insensible as before. When the husband left the place she recovered. The experiment as to the influence of the husband's presence was tried in all sorts of

ways. He was made to pass behind her, and to be near her in a separate ward, but this had no effect; but whenever he was brought to look on her face, though muffled up, or disguised as a policeman, as a Sepoy, and so forth, she was at once influenced. The experiment continued for about a month, and the conclusion was, the husband unconsciously mesmerised her. The court came to the conclusion that it was impossible she could live with him, and a separate allowance was ordered. The husband was asked to try if he could not remove the effect, seeing that he had the power to cause it, but he was quite frightened at the idea of having the power, and could not control it any way."—*The Homeward Mail*.

TESTIMONY OF MR. GERALD MASSEY.

In a published reply to a letter of a clergyman propounding certain inquiries and difficulties in regard to Spiritualism, Mr. Massey says:—

"I presume you mean that you think you would not care to see the lower physical phenomena. I myself do not take any very special interest in them. But we cannot always pick and choose if we mean to examine for ourselves. I am not aware, however, that Spiritualists take any great pleasure in the 'discords,' as such. Apparently you know little or nothing of the conditions of mediumship. At the lowest range these manifestations serve a purpose. I know of persons who were laid hold of in this way when every other appeal had failed. An outside reader, however, cannot be a judge of what transpires at *séances*. I was lately at a sitting with Mrs. Holmes. There were all the usual manifestations. It was a curious medley of sounds. Instruments struck and jangling while floating about the room, persons touched with the instrument, &c., whilst the medium was bound in her chair, and everybody else's hands were held. It was all very wonderful, still it was done in the dark. The ring was put on my arm, and on the arms of other persons. I know it was done whilst I held the medium's hands. I know it was not on the medium's arm previously. I know there was no break in the ring when tested. But these things are common to all present. The most convincing things are those which take place in a sort of personal privacy; little asides which are not in the programme; things over which mediums can have no control. For example, I may mention that I was promised beforehand, through another medium, that hands would be laid on my head four times. And this was fulfilled; no one else being touched in the same way. A similar experience occurred to me once at a sitting with Messrs. Herne

and Williams. In the midst of some unsatisfactory uproar, little fingers were playing with the palm of my right hand, which was resting and turned towards the table, too close for a medium's fingers to get under—besides which, they were baby-fingers. You see, if our theory be true, we have our own spirit-friends near us, and these are more anxious to give us proof of their presence than ever mediums can be, if we will only let them. It is to them I look for secret signs to be given to the true seeker who is really in earnest. . . .

The value of our phenomena is not to be appraised in any off handway by those who have not seen. They are not to be judged of at first sight by the questionable shape in which they come; but by the consequences resulting from the facts, when once they are established in your mind, and you can build upon them.

“Shipwrecked voyagers, who have been drifting for many days on some wretched raft in the wide forlorn sea-solitude, do not usually quarrel with, or even criticise, the first appearance they meet with in proof that they are approaching land, even though the signs may be only muddy waters and miserable waifs and strays of seaweed. Their first demand is not that they shall be met by a crowded ship, with colours flying and drums beating in proof that relief and safety are near; if they can but touch land, that is enough.”

A NOBLE FAITH.

“‘Oh! my life is very simple,’ said Dorothea, her lips curling with an exquisite smile, which irradiated her melancholy. ‘I am always at Lowick.’ ‘That is a dreadful imprisonment,’ said Will, impetuously. ‘No, don’t think that,’ said Dorothea. ‘I have no longings.’ He did not speak, but she replied to some change in his expression. ‘I mean, for myself. Except that I should like not to have so much more than my share without doing anything for others. But I have a belief of my own, and it comforts me.’ ‘What is that?’ said Will, rather jealous of the belief. ‘That by desiring what is perfectly good, even when we don’t quite know what it is, and cannot do what we would, we are part of the divine power against evil—widening the skirts of light, and making the struggle with darkness narrow.’ ‘That is a beautiful mysticism—it is a—’ ‘Please not to call it by any name,’ said Dorothea, putting out her hands entreatingly. ‘You will say it is Persian, or something else geographical. It is my life. I have found it out, and cannot part with it. I have always been finding out my religion since I was a little girl. I used to pray so much—now I hardly

every pray. I try not to have desires merely for myself because they may not be good for others, and I have too much already. I only told you, that you might know quite well how my days go at Lowick.'"—*Middlemarch*, by GEORGE ELIOT.

DISCUSSIONS IN THE NEWSPAPERS.

Public Opinion, the *National Reformer*, and other newspapers, London and provincial, following in the wake of the *Times*, have opened their columns to the discussion of Spiritualism. It is significant of the progress Spiritualism is making, that our journals, though still professing to regard it as a delusion or imposture, are not so rabid as formerly in their opposition, and even pluck up courage to venture on admissions which not very long ago they would not have dared to make. Thus the *Liverpool Mercury* now acknowledges that "Spiritualism is making converts the world over, not merely among the lowly, but among men and women of wealth and position—men and women who have influence over the rest of mankind. They do believe in it, by hundreds of thousands—by millions, the Spiritualists themselves say. There are hundreds of quiet homes scattered up and down this country where the medium is the most honoured visitor, and where some one or more members of the family are believed to be themselves mediums."

Our newspapers in their recent treatment of men of science, remind us of Neapolitan seamen, who, when the saints they have invoked fail to allay the storm, fall to and abuse their images. So, having invoked in vain the gods of the Royal Institution, other journals besides the *Times* are beginning to scold them for having in this matter signally failed in their duty by the public. Not long since, the *Standard* and the *Daily Telegraph* warned Dr. Carpenter that his explanation of Spiritualism could no longer be regarded as satisfactory. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* says,—“Here are phenomena of sufficient cogency to compel sincere belief in many minds, and no explanation even approximating to the point of satisfaction has yet been offered by men of science.” Even the so-called “religious journals” are taking up their parable against our professors, and profanely laugh at their *pseudo*-scientific explanations. For instance, that exemplary organ of the straitest sect of the Pharisees, the *Rock*, speaks in this wise:—“Folly surely can no further go than to suppose that ‘inner consciousness’ can make a table talk or spin, or ‘unconscious cerebration’ sustain Mr. Home in his aërial flights! Better pooh-pooh the subject at once than seek to smother the facts under a cloud of such unmeaning verbiage.” It argues that Mr. Dircks raises a false issue in saying the

manifestations are evolved in secret by some unpromulgated trick or deception. "To suppose that any mere 'trick,' with its thousands of practitioners and its millions of dupes, should have escaped detection for 30 years, is an idea too preposterous to be seriously entertained. But, apart from jugglery, only two possible modes of accounting for the phenomena have been proposed: they must either be due to some undiscovered force in nature, or be produced by the direct agency of spirits. The former hypothesis, could it but be made good, would exactly meet the case of those who, though they, like the Sadducees of old, refuse to believe in angel or spirit, nevertheless find themselves confronted by something that they cannot explain: so let science, say these, make haste and take the matter up."

THE CURE D'ARS AND NICHOLAS VON DER FLÜE.

The newspapers having announced the recent canonization of the Curé D'Ars and of Nicholas von der Flüe, the Hermit of Switzerland, it may be interesting to the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* to have their attention directed to the notices of these two remarkable and highly spiritual men, which have appeared in former numbers of this Magazine. In Volume IV. of the original series, (the volume for 1863) at page 97, is a sketch of the life of Jean Baptiste Maria Vianny, the Curé of Ars, a wonder-working and truly saintly man of our own time; and in Vol. VI. of the New Series, (the volume for 1871,) page 124, will be found an account of Nicholas von der Flüe, the Hermit of Ranft, near Sarnen, in Melchthal, one of the most remarkable men of Switzerland in the fifteenth century, both for the purity of his soul and the powers of his intellect, and who also is asserted by Swiss historians to have lived nearly 20 years without partaking of food, and who yet, though by abstinence reduced to a mere skeleton, enjoyed excellent health, and was possessed of great strength, physical as well as mental. William Howitt—to whose pen we are indebted for these accounts—has also, in a volume of poems—"The Mad War Planet, and other Poems," already noticed by us, page 271 of Vol. VI., New Series, devoted some beautiful lines to the celebration of this noble "Spiritualist." In a brief notice of the Swiss Hermit prefixed to this poem, he says, "His contemporaries blamed him for retiring from his family into solitude; but from his cell at Ranft he dispensed the wisest counsels and the greatest benefits to his countrymen. His noblest action was that of reconciling the contending heads of the Swiss Confederation, who having triumphed over all their enemies—Burgundy, France, and Austria—were about to turn their fratricidal swords against

each other. For this patriotic deed, his country has enshrined his memory in its inmost heart, and placed his name on one of the proudest pages of its annals. The fame of Nicholas spread over Europe. Popes, kings, and bishops honoured him, sent greetings to him, amongst whom was the celebrated Cardinal Charles Borromeo, who, as well as others, visited him." The whole career of Nicholas was marked by those signs of "mediumship" which to Spiritualists are of such deep interest, and which are by them comprehended as signs of the in and outflowing of a supernatural power, and, as in the case of these two good men, of a divine grace.

THE DUKE OF ROXBURGH AND HIS SERVANT.

[A Glasgow Professor at the Scott Centenary cited Sir Walter as a witness against Spiritualism. Certain we are that as Spiritualists we rarely find ourselves out of sympathy with Scott. The Edinburgh atmosphere wherein his life was passed was deadly to every form of supernaturalism, but the poet's honest natural instincts, if oppressed, survived, and are manifest in a multitude of utterances. The following anecdote is from his "Notes" to the *Antiquary*.—Ed.]

All who were acquainted with that accomplished nobleman, John, Duke of Roxburghe, must remember that he was not more remarkable for creating and possessing a most curious and splendid library, than for his acquaintance with the literary treasures it contained. In arranging his books, fetching and replacing the volumes which he wanted, and carrying on all the necessary intercourse which a man of letters holds with his library, it was the Duke's custom to employ, not a secretary or librarian, but a livery servant, called Archie, whom habit had made so perfectly acquainted with the library, that he knew every book, as a shepherd does the individuals of his flock, by what is called head-mark, and could bring his master whatever volume he wanted, and afford all the mechanical aid the Duke required in his literary researches. To secure the attendance of Archie, there was a bell hung in his room, which was used on no occasion except to call him individually to the Duke's study.

His Grace died in St. James' Square, London, in the year 1804; the body was to be conveyed to Scotland, to lie in state at his mansion of Floors, and to be removed from thence to the family burial-place at Bowden.

At this time, Archie, who had been long attacked by a liver-complaint, was in the very last stage of that disease. Yet he prepared himself to accompany the body of the master whom he had so long and so faithfully waited upon. The medical persons assured him he could not survive the journey. It signified nothing, he said, whether he died in England or Scotland; he was resolved to assist in rendering the last honours to the kind

master from whom he had been inseparable for so many years, even if he should expire in the attempt. The poor invalid was permitted to attend the Duke's body to Scotland; but when they reached Floors he was totally exhausted, and obliged to keep his bed, in a sort of stupor which announced speedy dissolution. On the morning of the day fixed for removing the dead body of the Duke to the place of burial, the private bell by which he was wont to summon his attendant to his study, was rung violently. This might easily happen in the confusion of such a scene, although the people of the neighbourhood prefer believing that the bell sounded of its own accord. Ring, however, it did; and Archie, roused by the well-known summons rose up in his bed, and faltered, in broken accents, "Yes, my Lord Duke—yes—I will wait on your Grace instantly;" and with these words on his lips, he is said to have fallen back and expired.

Correspondence.

INTUITION IN DREAMS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—There are few things that have more interested mankind in all ages than their dreams, as a secondary life in the night-side of the human mind. "Old men dream dreams; young men see visions;" and all life, says Shakespeare, is of such stuff as dreams are made of. But what has struck men most is, that, in the wanderings of the dream and in the illusion of the vision, there often comes gleams more real than reality, that is, powers of insight and foresight that surpass our abilities in the waking state, and by which we over-leap experience, like as do the instincts of the so-called lower animals. But scientific men of the present day vainly seek to explain these things by mechanical theories. They refer all to experience and observation, but ignore that which underlies experience and the experiences that custom and learning cannot account for, and that is, all those subtle properties and instincts and supersensual perceptions that will not square with their theories, but absolutely defy their modes of analysis; I mean, for instance, all those observed and known phenomena which we register under the term clairvoyance. Here is an undoubted instance that has occurred, at this moment, in respect to a poor lady of my acquaintance—a long resident of Boulogne—who is to be buried to-morrow. The case is this:—Five years ago, the daughter—then a fine girl of one-and-twenty—paid her mother a visit, but after a little while some family disagreement grew into a quarrel, and the daughter returned to Ireland, to reside with her grandmother, as before. Well, five years passed away without intercourse, in any shape, taking place between mother and daughter,—when the daughter had a dream that her mother was taken very ill, and which illness must end in death. She thought at first of writing, but she did not, feeling the impulse so strong and irresistible that she must go at once to Boulogne and see her mother and remain with her to the last. She arrived, and found that her mother had been taken ill at the time and in the manner she had dreamed. She nursed her day and night, and after seven weeks of protracted illness the mother died; much having occurred in several particulars as had appeared to her daughter in her dream. The friends at home immediately on

her daughter leaving wrote to the mother's husband to explain about the dream, and the daughter insisting on leaving immediately. Of course, sceptics will talk of coincidences, and will think that to be a sufficient explanation, but Lord Bacon was fully aware of the force of the argument of coincidences, but, nevertheless, could not but give weight to the fact that when in Paris on the night that his father died in London, he dreamed that his father's house was covered over with black plaster, and the dream so impressed him that he related it to several persons.

Here, then, are two cases, both between parent and child, with a *rapport* set up as of some singularly delicate test or inner sense by which the subtle action and influence might be noted when the senses were dormant, for both in sleep and the mesmeric trance, and in certain states of disease, and often near death, when the senses are weakened or prostrate, the inner and instinctive sense seems released, and to possess a free power that could rarely be otherwise exerted, or flowing rather into spontaneous activity; and it is not very different from what occurs with a man inspired or in deep thought when these become a fixed tranquillity, and the sense is withdrawn within, from whence the original thoughts flash forth as the lightning from the dark clouds. Then, in the case I have related, we have a strong impression and conviction of reality that it is not all a dream; that is, the person has the sense of the impression being different from what we have in a mere ordinary dream, however vivid the thoughts and visions may be; and, beyond all, we have the premonition of this death, as of the event casting its dark shadow before it.

Here, then, to conclude, we have a special sympathy as with the sounding and sensitive flame, only in an infinitely more rare and subtle degree, and in this character and this force is conveyed, the seed of the special intelligence induced and made manifest in the free soul and sense of the spirit of the sleeper; and I think this is as much as we can say at present by way of explanation. But when people shy at these novel matters like an untrained horse at something unusual on the roadside, not aware that those matters rejected are the very lights they need; and they are not aware of the little we know of the reasons for anything, and how little we can say by way of explanation in regard to our ordinary thoughts and perceptions, our ignorance being veiled by familiarity, for at present we are but at the very threshold of the knowledge and science of life and mind.

HENRY G. ATKINSON.

MR. FROUDE ALLEGES A GIRL TO HAVE BEEN RAISED TO LIFE BY MESMERISM.—INFORMATION WANTED.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—Lately reading Froude's "Short Studies on Great Subjects," in the essay entitled, *A Plea for the Free Discussion of Theological Difficulties*, I met with the following passage:—

"An unusually able accomplished person, accustomed to deal with common-sense facts, a celebrated political economist and notorious for business-like habits assured this writer that a certain mesmerist, who was my informant's intimate friend, had raised a girl to life."

The case referred to in the foregoing statement may be known to some of your numerous readers. If the facts have not been given to the public, a detailed statement of them could not fail to prove highly interesting. It is hardly possible that such a statement could be thus made, if devoid of any foundation, whilst it is easily conceivable that the parties cognizant of such an extraordinary occurrence might not have had the moral courage to publish it, though they might now feel encouraged by the gradual change in public opinion to give it publication.

Union Club, London.

I am, yours obediently,

E. T. W.